

Out of the skillet, into the fire.

Chapter -4-

In april of 1961 the bay of pigs was making use of my fathers harbor charts for the Kennedy Administration. The invasion had been planned under Eisenhower. I was trying to transition from farm life to inner city culture. Mom had enroll me in the 3rd grade at the Thurber Village Catholic Church. They were always spewing out bullshit that if I ate meat on fridays I'd got to hell. Enter Mr. John Staton! John Staton had three finger crab like configuration as a result of World War Two. I remember him as always being drunk. Most of the time he couldn't walk, let alone talk. I supposed the blood and guts nightmares of combat must have fucked up his head. The government gave him a small pension but for World War 2 Vets unless you went postal there was no mental treatment. He was from the mountains of West Virginia and lived with and wife and 6 children in a 3 bedroom apartment on Kleiner Alley. I could not grasp how he was able to drive and hold a delivery truck job. He was one tuff mother fucker. Unfortunately for me, he demanded that his 4 boys fight other children before he would allow them to become friends. Sadly, If his boys lost a fight he would take a belt to them. Then he would insist that they go back and keep fighting the person until they won. He would beat them if they were afraid or refused his orders. Mr. Staton preferred fists fights but if the other kid used a weapon shit got deep quick. In that case the 4 brothers would jump in. Each weekday after school I would see the kids fighting up in the alley. It terrified me. Somebody was always getting their ass kicked after school. Nature had taught me all about fighting. Fuck that! I wanted nothing to do with that nonsense. At the time the three youngest Gary, Oscar and Ernie Staton were going to Hubbard Ave Elementary school. They were terrified of their mountain hillbilly dad. They loved him. They were devoted to him. But his kids never disobeyed his orders. Most of the time the kids would shake hands after the fight and become friends. But if another west virginia kid made a challenge it could turn into a war fought with knives and clubs. These all white gang fights would take place on the Hubbard Ave school Yard or at Goodale Park. I thought It was an interesting use of local tax dollars at work.

I was able to avoid the combat situation during the 3rd grade because I went to Saint Frances. Hubbard Elementary was about a block away from Kleiner and West Prescott Alleys, but Saint Francis of Assisi was about 10 blocks away on Buttles Ave in Thurber Village. It was well away from Kleiner Alley so I didn't have much contact with the alley early on. I stayed indoors most of the time watching Mr. Peabody and Sherman, Beanie & Cecil, Rocky and Bullwinkle, Mighty Mouse or American Bandstand. I feared going outside without my mother. I didn't know how to fight. Nor did I want to learn. Fuck that shit! I became a genius at stealth and avoidance. After I left the farm I only went back 2 or 3 times to visit Grammy. A few years later my grandmother got kicked by a cow. After that she was in and out of the hospital but eventually died from the kicking incident. I didn't really understand the meaning of her passing. She had appointed my aunt Rose guardianship of my \$1000 dollar trust fund which I was to receive when I turned 21.

I started living with my mom the summer of 1961 and in the fall I began to attend Saint Francis. Unfortunately, I had to go to church each day before school and the dress code required a uniform. Our dressed was white shirt, black pants, black shoes, and bow tie. Each weekday morning after church the Dominican Nuns would do a headcount then goose step us nazi style to the classroom. There, third and fourth grades shared the same room. No

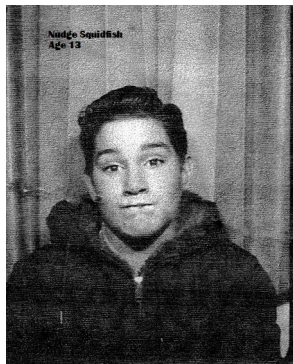
talking. You looked only at the Nun who was in charge of both grades. The nuns paddle anyone who broke the rules or failed to give the correct answer in class. Fuckin Nazis! It was out of the skillet and into the fire for squidly. I was always afraid and didn't socialize with anyone. It took 2 years of begging my mother to transfer my ass to the public school system. For me it was either deal with the fighting, get beat by the nuns or raped by the priest. Gee I was having a blast! I was forced to learn latin which didn't work because they expected the males to become altar boys for the church. Somehow I was able to avoid that priest's butt buddy gig. You either learned, got fucked or got beat. In the two years I may have got my ass beat once or twice. I was lucky and I kept an extremely low profile.

In the 3rd grade after school I began to explore the woods and railroad tracks behind channel 10 TV on my bike. This kept me out of sight from Kleiner and W. Prescott Alley. From my bike excursions I discovered that a lot of teenagers from central high school were having sex under the bridges or at Movie Drive Ins back then. Moreover, the river banks were the safest place for gay men and their hired boys to go. Lots of campfires had cardboard boxes and discarded blanket laying about. Beer cans and broken glass were everywhere. Back then if people found out you were gay they would bash your face in. It was very common for poor kids to hustle the queers at the corner of first and high street for cash. Most of the kids really needed the money. You could always tell which kids were hustling because they would buy new shoes or clothes with their wages. It was a seedy situation and I always avoided it. The kids for hire ranged from 10 to 18 years of age and business was always brisk on friday and saturday night. When the alley was in a safe mode I would go explore the abandoned factories along the closed down Union Station railroad tracks which is now the arena district in downtown columbus.

I made my 1st friend at age 9 with a genius kid who later, at 14, got a scholarship to Dartmouth college. Ronnie Smith, the oldest of six, was also trying to avoid Kleiner and W. Prescott Alleys fist fights. He had noticed me dodging the other kids and we struck up a friendship. I nicknamed him "bones" cause he was so skinny. Bones love to read and spent almost all his time at home studying. Soon we were using magnifying glasses roast ants or firecracker to blow up crayfish. Sometimes we would go swim in the river or use be-be guns to shoot pigeons. Later, his brother Steve, who I nicknamed "Wiff" start to hang with us on trips to the river. Wiff could always smell trouble coming. Finally, Mike Johnson and Mark Marcum, who I nicknamed "Carcass" joined our bicycle gang. Our trips could ended up taking us 5 miles from home. Mostly we explored and fished the Clintonville and Grandview areas of Columbus. We stuck mostly to the river or railroad tracks stopping to set up a campfire in the woods at lunch time. Lunch mostly consisted of a 16 oz Coke & a bag of Lays potato chips all for 25 cents! Sometimes, out of stupidity, if we ventured into the black hoods were we got chased or beaten up. The black kids hated the whites and if you were stupid enough to trespass on their turf you got what you deserved. Most of the time your bike could out run somebody on foot. But if they caught you then they kicked you ass, and then take your money and your bike.

When Oscar Staton got wind of our little gang he challenged me to a fight. But I knew I had to get permission from his older brother Gary Staton. So I asked Gary if it would be ok. He was pissed off at Oscar anyway and said alright. Lucky me. Gary Staton was a natural born fighter. His dad had brainwashed him. If he deemed you a coward you were shunned and insulted. Anyway, it turned out ok and Oscar joined our bike gang. That was my first fight.

Who ever threw the sucker punch won. Oscar then introduced John Maynard and Ralph who I nicknamed "Mousey". When the Rolling Stones did their 1st gig at the Marquee Club in London on Oxford St in July of 1962 I was into the TV shows Doobie Gills; Yogi Bear, Fireball XL5, The Jetsons and a game I had created called "walk the wall". There was this old condemned turn of the century mansion we called the "spook house". It was at the corner of Park and Hubbard. It had a 3 inch ledge about 2 feet off the ground and I spend the whole summer learning how to walk on it. Another time Ron, Steve and I made the mistake of putting a firecracker into an abandoned gas line close to the spook house. There was a spider in there and we want to blow it up. Ka-Boom! The ground quaked and flames shot up 50 feet into the trees. The cops arrived but I had skedaddled. I was on the lam for about a week from the police who were looking for me. After that I stayed at home reading comic books like the silver surfer or robot fighter and playing with army men and cap guns.



Soon word had reached me that Oscar Staton was in the hospital with 10 stitches and a broken hand. It seem a rival west virginian of italian extraction had pulled a switchblade on him in a fist fight. That was a no no big time! I heard the other kid was in the hospital too with a broken jaw and quite a few missing teeth. I hear oscar had almost killed kid after he was cut. They had to pull him off. At that point I started to back away and retreated into music and TV. The 1st song I remember was **"Earth Angel" by the Penguins** (October 1954). But it wasn't till **Shelley Fabares "Johnny Angel"** in 1962 that I began to noticed radio. An orphan friend named Dennis Craig used to jam on the church house steps at the corner of Park Ave and 1st. He had a Kent guitar and during summer break was studying how to play it. He showed me a few cords so I kept after my mom for a guitar. He told me about Jim Jenkins who was also learning with Dennis. I would stop by Jim's pouch when it was safe and watch them play. In the meantime to stay off the streets, I had taken up model airplanes and building rockets. Once the rockets were ready I'd bike with some friend down to the river and blast them off. Most of us had BB guns by this time and we love to shoot at the trains, pigeons, hornet nest or pop bottles.

Sometimes mom would leave me alone at home for a week or two while she went to see a lover out of state. I was to report in once a day to Mark Marcum's mother who was even crazier than my mom. She never washed her oily hair and dressed in rags. The great depression must have destroyed her mind. My mother had promised to pay her \$25 to babysit me. But went mom return she but reneged on the deal. This caused lots of social problems for me. Mom was always causing social problems with my friends. She yelled at them or run them off if they ask if I could come out to play. Mom didn't mean to poison my friendships but that is the way it worked itself out. How my mom was able to hold a government job was beyond me. If fact, a few times her bosses had her lock up at the shrink ward at OSU hospital. I think once after my sister came to stay in 1971 we were left alone for a few weeks while mom was being treated at OSU. Later on as teenagers mom went to South Carolina to shack up with Hank her alcoholic boyfriend for six months leaving us teenagers to fend for ourselves. I've always said the childhood is something that we spend the rest of our lives trying to overcome. In my case it wasn't until I reached 60 and after 10 years mental health counseling that I succeeded.



For me 1963 was the end of the beat generation's age of innocence and the beginning of the revolution. I was in the 5th grade at Saint Frances when my mother told me my dad was ill and was coming to stay with us for a few days. It was the first time in the 8 years that I had seen my father. He had left when I was a toddler. I barely remember him at all. The highlight of his stay was he took me to White Castle and bought me lunch. I never really got to know him. He seemed like a good stable person who had experienced some serious spy shit and wanted to say goodbye. But my brain injury to the medulla oblongata as an infant kept me from understanding the cognitive situation. For me it was a pleasant day spent with some total stranger who seem to love me. But at the time none of it computed. My world was The Secret Agent Man and Outer Limits TV shows. Both were rocking my world at that age. After dad's visit mom bought me a Kent guitar and amp. She paid Dennis Craig to give me lessons so I began to spend almost all my time at home trying to play. I spent long hard hours with the Mel Bay Chord book trying to develop callus on my finger tips. By 1964 Dennis thought I was good enough to hang out with him and Jim Jenkins who were always jamming on Jim's porch. Dennis had developed a reputation as a "hot" lead guitarist by the age of 15. He was playing professionally with a band of North High School kids at dances and parties. He was making money at it. Dennis's band consisted of him on lead; John Papa/vocal (senior), Jim Harbarger/rhythm (Jurnor), Tim Kerrwood/drums (Junior), and Jerry Malzer (senior) on bass. Then one day Jim Jenkins invited me to watch **the Beatles** on the Ed Sullivan. Ka-Boom! The 1964 shows on Feb 9th, Feb 16th & Feb 23rd rocked my world. Wow! Long Hair! Pop Music! I had become a "tinybopper". The radio was taking over my life and Bob Harrington's show on WCOL was my lifeline to coolville. The music was fantastic. It was the golden age of Pop and I was hooked. It was the coolest thing I had ever experienced in life. My understanding of alley life had suddenly changed. But at the time I wasn't that serious about music. I didn't have focus and I was struggling with learning how to tune my guitar by ear. Jim did the tuning for me. Today everyone uses tuners but I think using your ears gives you a deeper understanding of sound in the classical sense. I can tell intuitively what key someone is playing in without seeing their hands. That is, I know a 440 when I hear it. A tuner won't teach you how to feel a key. Bob Pollard of GBV has this gift also. I once saw him on stage, drunk out of his fucking head, walk over to the guitarist and tune his B string right in the middle of a lead solo. I too can do that kind of shit.

Sometime in 1964, after the **Beatles** film "**Hard Days Night**" and the **Dave Clark 5's** film "**Having a Wild Weekend**", **The Rolling Stones** broke into the columbus mainstream. By then me, Mike Johnson, Steve and Ronnie Smith join the boy scouts. Colonel Augie Ray of scout troop 297 was a product of Korea era. So, in February 1964, with two foot snow and minus 5 below he takes us to Camp Lazarus for a weekend of survival camping. Yea Buddy! The plot thickens. Our first night the drinking water turned to ice. We spend the whole night with 3 kids to a sleep bag to try to stay warm. God forbid if you needed to shit. Moreover, The green wood we cut didn't light and we use up all our matches. To make matters worse he drop us off at 5 PM and didn't return till 9AM next day. While G.I. Joe slept in his cozy warm bed we froze our nuggets off in the woods. That fucking nutcase wanted to teach us

about his Korea combat experiences. Fuck him and Fuck Korea! But we were afraid of him because he had kill in hand to hand combat.

We cussed all night long. We imagine how we could torture that sick bastard. Pee in his coffee won the popular vote! When he finally show up all “happy and shit” some of us cried about going home. But Colonel Augie Ray lay it on us about become “men”. So we spent the next night in freezing hell but this time had water and a fire. We all slept so close to the fire that some of sleeping bags caught flame. Later on that July, Somehow that wacko talked us kids into going to a boy scout jamboree in Logan Ohio. This was the first time I came in contact with **Rom The ET**. I had forgot all about the experience until Rom reminded me of it in 2015. Around 8 PM Ronnie and I had climbed to this very high ridge overlooking a valley of evergreen trees. A few miles away were about 5 thousand kids partying in the woods. Suddenly Ronnie shouted out “look”! Inside the trees sat a solid UFO which turned into a pure blinking light and rose up into the clouds. Neither one of us understood what we were experiencing. But the whole experience lasted about a minute. Being kids we just blew it off and happily headed to the jamboree site to party.

In the fall of 1964 mom told me that I could transfer for the 6th grade to Hubbard Elementary. Yea! On the one hand I was overjoyed to be rid of the flat top nuns, but on the other I knew I’d have to cope with the fist fighting and bullying after school. Meanwhile, John Maynard had taken over an abandoned garage. He turned it into a clubhouse for our bicycle gang. We were always repairing slow leaks or flats tires from our raids into forbidden neighborhoods. We would make spiked clubs that neatly fit onto the bike frames. Also we installed extra long banana seats which could easily hold two riders and backpack. The “Easy Rider” backrest rose up about 10 inch and we put flashing red lights on the tail fender. Inside the pack were repair kits, water & bike tools. The front handlebars were like the ones seen in the movie “Easy Rider”. We were kids on bikes pretending to be hells angels. When we hit the streets there were about 10 of us traveling in a group. The summer break of 1964 saw us installing a couch and chairs in the clubhouse and listening to the radio with local females who would have sex with John when nobody was around. Porno magazines were another valuable treasure at our clubhouse. Back then I was listening to songs like: “I want to hold your hand, She loves you, Can’t buy me love, Love me do, A world without love, I get around, A hard day’s night, The house of the rising sun, Do wah diddy diddy, and I feel fine”.

John Maynard was about 13 then. He had a silver tongue and his older big biker brothers would buy us beer. Sometimes his brothers would take a few of us to the drive in movies. That's' how I got to see movies like **“Having a Wild Weekend”** by **Dave Clark 5** and **“Hold On”** by **Herman’s Hermits**. John’s brothers were auto mechanics in their early 20’s. They knew how to manufacture parts for his bike. Years later when our group of kids switched from bicycles to autos some of the girls got pregnant. Oh Boy. The girls ranged form 13 to 17. In Ohio no one under the age of 18 could get married. Ohio State Law did not enforce child support upon the minors male back then unless you got married out of state. To make matters worse if you could find rubbers they would most likely leak. As I got more into guitar I began to temporarily drift away from the alley and began playing music with Jim Jenkins and Dan White who were two friends I made in 6th grade.

Dan White or “Dilly” was from West Virginia. He had been in trouble but for the most part was into poetry and the Beatles. He was much taller than me and a good street fighter.

When I saw him kick Gary Staton ass on the playground I knew he was a battle tested street tuff. Dan was friends with Jim Jenkins who lived at 84 West First Ave. Jim was a great artist who liked to work with paints or pencils. Our 6th grade home room was on the top floor and we always had to take the steps up to the 4th floor. At the railing of that floor stood Mrs. Bucklow overlooking our ascent. We were always looking up her dress into her panties as she greeted the kids. Most of the time Mrs. Kimball stood next to her smiling. We could clearly see the outline of their beavers. "Hello Mrs. Bucklow. Your new dress is pretty Mrs Bucklow!". "Don't you look beautiful today Mrs. Kimball". To me Hubbard Elementary was so fucking groovy. I didn't have to study and coasted through with zero academic effort. As it turns out Mrs Kimball was madly in love with my classmate named Ronnie Scarberry. But this was a well guarded secret to the staff and student body. Not the first time in history that kind of thing has happened.

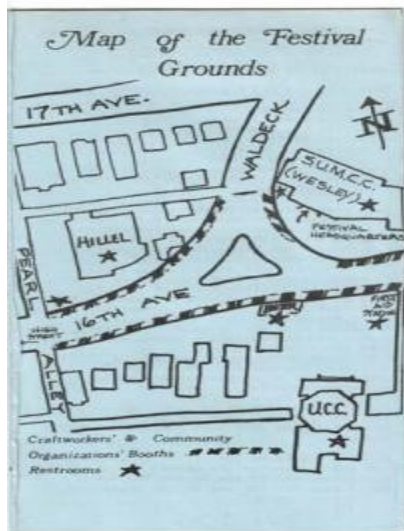
That May of 1965, drunken Ernie who worked at buckeye steel foundry pouring iron into tank forms; began to sing country and western songs on his back porch. Ernie Smalls would sing his ass off while drinking himself legless. Jim and I would sit on his steps while he ran through all the greatest Nashville hits from the 50's. He even showed us a few cords. Mr. Ernie Smalls was uneducated artist. 20 years later after he kicked drinking he went on to decorate his new home at the conner of Mt. Pleasant & 4th Ave with thousands of hand made nicknacks (one block east of the post office). But In May of 1965 he was the real deal. Better than any of the country radio stuff I had heard. Having worked hard labor with no education he sang with a coal miner's authority. His hands were like sledge hammers and we often wonder how those huge muscular finger could cord the guitar.

Eventually a few of us kids went to the Garden Theater at 5th & High Street to see the movie **"When the Boys Meet the Girls"** which featured **"Listen People"** by **Herman's Hermits** and **"Monkey See, Monkey Do"** by **Sam The Sham & the Pharaohs**. In August of 1965 **Herman Hermits** had a hit with **"I'm Into something Good"** and in September **The Monkeys** hit with a weekly TV show plus **"Last Train to Clarksville"** 45. Years later in 1997 when Jim Shepard moved into an apartment over the Garden Theater and I remembered having all that sexual action in the theater below. In my hood a "stinky kitty finger" was a badge of honor. The gang use to recoil in "confirmation" to my delight. Suddenly sex was beginning to come clearly into focus as the I headed into the 7th grade. But I was still a virgin at that point. For Everett Jr. High School students during the 1965 through 1968 cycle, the Garden Theater was the weekly Saturday hang out. Saturdays meant that it was finger pie and popcorn time for the young ladies and gentlemen at Everett.

In September of 1965 Miss Kimball became my 7th Grade homeroom teacher at Everett Jr. High School. Ronnie Scarberry was in my 7th grade home room class and he got her pregnant I think. Ronnie Scarberry was 15 but look about 25. He was a greaser Elvis rocker type. He was dark and handsome; never came to class, but bragged about fucking Mrs. Kimball's brains out. Kimball was about 25 at the time. She was hot but Ronnie had controlled over her heart. Later on in 1966 after she quit teaching; I think they got married, gave birth, then they unceremoniously disappeared from life. This has happen a lot in my life. People come and go. It was my first experience with observing true love. But It was not the first time a boy in my class got a girl pregnant. It also happen in 6th grade at Hubbard with a guy named Max Booth and his sweetie pie. Both of them vastly excelled at puberty.

They fucked all the time. Both were from Lebanon and for them this was quite normal. In the end they drop out of 5th grade got married and started working in his dad's business I think.

In the Fall of 1965 Dan White got in trouble again for a few months. Dan came from an unstable working single mom home. She had 3 or 4 kids to raise alone. Dan was the oldest. As best I can tell he was the man of the house. But he was always getting into trouble. Around this time I started smoking weed and drinking beer with Jim off and on. Jim and I got turned on to weed by a kid name Ralph Nelson. Nelson was older than us and had been kicked out of Central High School. He was the first "head" I ever encountered. He spent all his time at the high street Mcdonalds across from OSU. He sold "lids" or "nickel bags" back



when pot was unknown and totally legal in Ohio. Back then the parents, teachers and cops didn't know what pot was. The cops only focused on busting minors with alcohol. The first time Jim and I smoked nothing happened and we thought Nelson had ripped us off. The next day Nelson urged us to try once more and we got high.

Sometimes Jim, Dan & Denis would hang out on the porch swing trying to work out beatle songs. Other times they were in Jim's bedroom listening to records. One day Denis had figured out how to play **"The Little Black Egg"**. This song was first performed by Daytona Beach, Florida garage band **The Nightcrawlers** in 1965. They played it for me live with Denis playing singing and doing lead while Jim played rhythm. They rock out on their Kent guitars and matching 10 watt amps. Dan didn't play music at that point but like to sing. Soon things began to change quickly in the

hood.

By the summer of 1966 we "tinyboppers" were walking up to campus to track Nelson down. Suddenly that summer the blacklighted psychedelic poster head shops called the "Bazaar" & "Trade Winds" appeared on campus. The owners must have been to San Francisco. The stores were very "Haight & Ashbury". They sold beads, posters, incense, pipes and new age jewelry at Trade Winds. One of the female owners, I think, helped to establish the Community Festival which my band **"Greyship"** played in **1973**. Another of my early hang outs was Discount Count Records which was at 1956 N. High St next to McDonalds. Jim & I would save up our bread and buy records there. That place was heaven to us.

The old bike gang was giving way to the emerging Hippy culture. The clubhouse had turned into a place to take your girl if you wanted to get laid. Sometimes we would smoke weed and drink beer with the girls. The bikes were gone and the cars were coming on strong. When the landlord found out about the Hanky Panky he paid us to tear the clubhouse down. It didn't stop shit. The older kids just switched to drive in movies to have sex. Sometimes with two couples sharing the same auto. The front seat would do blow jobs and finger fucks while sex in the backseat shook the car. As I recall there was this stray dog we called Prince. Prince loved to kill then eat alley rats. One day Mark Marcum and Mike Johnson had trapped a huge fat rat in a trash can. When Prince arrived on the scene he begged to jump into the

trash can and kill the rat. So they took the lid off and zoom, Prince ate the critter. Chomp! Chomp! Yummy! Prince loved them rats!

Back in the spring of 1966 pot was unknown. This was before acid and mushrooms hit the streets of OSU in 1967. The cops were only focused on busting minors with alcohol. So Jim and I use to go over to the oval or mirror lake to smoke pot and drink beer alone by Mirror Lake. However, In another year or so OSU would start to sponsor local live bands at the oval for the growing counter culture. Now a days OSU sponsors international act like the Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd at the stadium. Cha-Ching! But looking back the only thing that got your ass kicked in the 7th grade was wearing "White Socks". If you were stupid enough to wear them you would get labeled a "Bus Driver"; and at Everett Jr. High School it was a crime against humanity. It seemed stupid to me but I adhered to cultural rule. I had survived the nuns and I would get through Everett Jr. High School. Jim and I would frequently get jumped by bullies on on walk to Everett. Jim Pinson was a big mean bully. He hated hippies and was always trying to corner Jim and I at recess. If given the chance he would gleefully beat the shitout of us and take our lunch money. We soon took the back alleys to avoid that cunt. We were the only "Freaks" in the Short North area that summer. Back in 1966 the short north was nothing but slums. Row after row of derelict houses. A real fucking eye sore. For me going to Everett Jr. High School was much more stressful than Hubbard Elementary had been. However, a local TV station started to air a Saturday afternoon TV show called "Dance Party" hosted by Jerry Rasor.



"Dance Party" feature bands like **The Rebounds** (Tommy Williams Lead Guitarist), **The Dantes** (Dave Workman Lead Guitarist) and **The 5th Order** (Billy Carroll Vocals). Dave Workman gave me lessons around 1972 in the basement of downtown store called "The Union" which was directly across from Lazarus

Department store. The same store where Mike Rep and Jim Shepard worked years later. These 3 band were regulars on the Saturday afternoon Channel 4 TV show Dance Party. Dance Party (aka Jerry Rasor's Dance Party aka Dance-O-Rama) started 1964 by Columbus DJ Jerry Rasor was the second longest and probably the second most famous show in the state behind Upbeat. The show aired on WLWC (channel 4), Saturday 11 AM for an hour. During the summer shows were taped on location at local outdoor teen dance spots. Dance Party included local and national acts. The show was not syndicated and most of the material was not saved. Dance Party had a huge R.O.T.C. frat boys following. Kids from the Columbus Ohio suburbs where the only ones who were allowed on the set. No ghetto kids allowed. Jerry's "Dance Party" also booked his TV acts for gigs at Valleydale Ballroom on the east side of Columbus. Valley Dale has been hosting entertainment since the 1930s/40s. In the mid 60s teen dances and battle of the bands competitions were held there. It was considered to be the top venue in Columbus back then. At 14 Jim and I would make a day of it and hitchhike out to the Valleydale shows and hussle our way in because we were both under 16. In 1966 having long hair would get you beat up or hassled by the local authorities. However, Jim & I only had a quarter inch of hair hanging over our ears. The bands had much longer hair. **The Rebounds, Dantas** and **5th Order** were the ones I tried to follow in the beginning. Later on it was **Mayflower Proposition, Tree, J.D. Blackfoot** and finally

Osiris. I was hooked. I use to follow Roukue & Jeff Whitlock, Dan (Tinkerbelle) Waldron and Ben Vadervort (J.D. Blackfoot) from gig to gig. To me they were much cooler than The Monkeys, Herman's Hermits or Dave Clark 5. I would "Nudge" myself right up to the front of the stage so I could see Jeff Whitlock's hands. In my mind he had replaced Dave Workman as my guitar god. He was using a Hagstrom guitar at the time. He taught me quite a lot about basic lead guitar.

Most of the teenagers were 16-21 at the Valley Dale shows. The fashion back then was Flat Tops or Buzz Jobs. **The Rebounds** came from Brookhaven High School. They won the city-wide 1965 Northland Shopping Center Battle of the Bands beating the Dantas. But I didn't see it. With a contract from Tower Records they cut "I'm Not Your Stepping Stone" along with "Little Black Egg" and "Since I Fell For You" at Bell Sound in New York City. "Stepping Stone" was a huge Columbus hit but The Monkey's National TV show version which was released a few weeks after The Rebounds version zoomed to the top of the Billboard 100. Don Kirshner had crushed Tower Records. No doubt because of deeper pockets. So Tower decided to record another 45 of Rebounds original material. "Purpose and Destination" was the follow up but failed to chart Billboard's top 100.



The Dantes released three singles in the mid-sixties on Jamie Records and Cameo Records. "Can't Get Enough Of Your Love" and "80-96" The Dantes opened up for such acts as The Jimi Hendrix Experience, The Byrds, Iron Butterfly, Them, Strawberry Alarm Clock, Roy Orbison, and The Outsiders. A Dantes gig would include a whole set of all Stones covers. The first, "Can't Get Enough of Your Love" was written by rhythm guitarist Lynn Wehr from North High and exploded over the mid-Ohio airwaves in the spring of 1966.

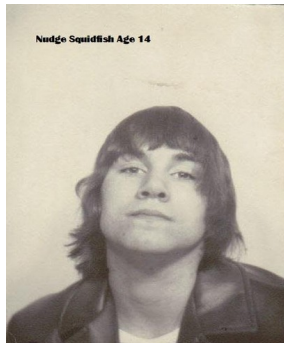
The Dantes scored again with their second release "Under My Thumb (Rolling Stone Cover)". Finally, The band released their 3rd 45 "Connection" (Another Rolling Stone Cover) in 1967. They continued until 1968 then died out.



Music by "The Fifth Order" proved good—and loud!

The 5th Order built a strong fan base with their regular gig on the Dance Party. They had a 45 regional hit with "Goin' Too Far" b/w "Walking Away". They recorded several songs for a follow up, and they chose, "A Thousand Devils". But, after a year of being a top columbus band, they decided they couldn't continue and broke up in late '67. In '68, **The 5th Order** Retro-issued "I was a Fool" as a 45. During their time they open for the **4 Tops, Paul Revere & The Raiders, Neil Diamond** and **Question Mark & The Mysterians**. Jim and I saw them open for **Paul Revere & The Raiders** at Veterans Memorial and they rocked. I also saw **Cream, Doors, Soft**

Machine, Jeff Beck, Mountain and **Hendrix** at Veterans. Paul Revere was the house band for **Dick Clark's** weekly national TV show called "**Where The Action Is**". To be honest this show kept me off the street. The show turned me on to the new groups on radio.



Nudge Squidfish Age 14

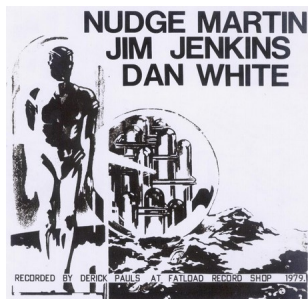
Also, that summer of 1966 saw Gary Staton challenge Danny Yoakam (the big brother of Actor/Musician **Dwight Yoakam**) to a fist fight. The fight was to occur at Goodale Park but Danny ran for his life from Gary. Being a coward was a "no-no" according to west virginia street code. Whenever Danny & **Dwight Yoakam** were spotted by the Kleiner Alley kids, The Statons would try to beat the shit out of them. The Statons' were jonesing just to crush the Yoakam's' like grapes. If they couldn't catch the wiley Yoakam's' they would throw rocks at them. A bit of Hillbilly contempt suspect. I always admired **Dwight**

Yoakam for sticking up for his big brother who wasn't into fighting to prove he wasn't a coward. Also, I like Dwight Yoakam as an artist. Years later Dwight would turn into an accomplished actor.

That fall me and Jenkins were totally into running away from fighting at that point. Vietnam was the sword of damocles overshadowing our survival. I just turned 15 in July and was still safe from registering for the draft. Neither Jim or I wanted to kill anything. We just wanted to listen to music, hit on females and smoke good herb. The only place where we could be free was at the Oval or Mcdonalds. But them mighty Northern winds of change were blowing Bob Dylan our way..

It wasn't all darkness at Everett Jr. High. At breaks we could smoke pot in the boys room and nobody knew what the hell we were doing. Teachers would come in trying to catch students smoking cigarettes and thought that the toilets had backed up again. Sometimes they saw a kid with a cigarette and turned to walk away. At lunch time I'd fire up a joint and fit right in with greasers folks taking a cigarette break. Under the guise of "Turkish Tobacco" I'd smoke my wacky tobacky. I would simply groove out to WCOL on my transistor radio and watch the neverending fist fights in the school yard. Sometimes a kid would come up and ask me who is on the radio. There I was in the middle of about 250 kids listening to songs like: The Sounds of Silence, We Can Work It Out, Good Lovin, Monday, Monday, Paint It Black,

Paperback Writer, Hanky Panky, Wild Thing, Sunshine Superman, 96 Tears, Last Train to Clarksville, Good Vibrations, Mr. Tambourine Man, Mellow Yellow or Hurdy Gurdy Man.



It felt like I was on another beautiful and peaceful planet stoned out of my melon. The golden age of POP had began and I was right at the beginning of all the social magic and conflict. I could see down the path that led to Vietnam. My "tinybopper" puberty wasn't buying into that. Vietnam was a Wall Street lie. But It was the only job a poor 18 year old kid could get. All the rich kids avoided it by going to OSU. But us scumfucks I had no choice. So I chose the hippy path. Tune in, turn on and drop out. The nice thing about the situation was the bullies were afraid of pot. Most them were earmarked for Vietnam anyway. Years later, if they were lucky to not to get their guts blown out; most of the R.O.T.C kids turned into hippies. But when I was 14 the hillbilly code protected us from anyone who would want to rat us out to the school about weed. I doubt in the summer of 1966 The Rebounds, The Dantas or The 5th Order even smoked pot. Mostly likely they just got drunk and laid.

There was only one drug dealer on campus at that time and it was Ralph Nelson. But that fall things began to rapidly change. Jim kept talking about forming a band so we got our moms to buy us matching ampeg amps. I got a 100 watt B-15n bass rig and Jim got a 100 watt ampeg. When I got a copy of the **Rolling Stones "Now"** LP I hunkered down with Jim trying to work out the guitar parts. When Dennis Craig heard us play in Jim room he took note for future reference. I suspect that maybe because he had a reoccurring gig at fort Hayes Army base. The band at the time include Jerry Malzer/guitar, Jim Harbarger/ guitar, Dennis Craig/bass, Tim Kerrwood/drums and Johnny Papa on vocals. When Jerry Malzer and Johnny Papa left the band Dennis Craig ask me to play bass for an upcoming gig. All of them were North High school kids. That friday night saw me play my first gig at the Fort Hayes Army base in Columbus Ohio. The new band at the time include Jim Harbarger/guitar and vocal, Dennis Craig/guitar and vocal, Tim Kerrwood on drums, and me on bass. We did a lot of early 60's motown soul & english pop covers for my first show. And, It turned out to be a blast. I made about 5 bucks for four 45 minute sets. I thought I had hit the big time! Anyway, a week later on, Dennis Craig ask me and Jenkins to substitute again for John Papa & Jerry Malzer. That June of 1966 I would play bass and Jim would play rhythm. It was my second gig ever. The gig was at the Fort Hayes Army base which welcomed GI's returning home from Hamburg Germany. It was across from the Koger bread factory next to Ross labs.

The GI's were happy to say goodbye to the Army. Most of the crowd was in their mid twenties. From some of them I was getting a first hand account of the Beatles. To me the "*red light district*" of hamburg germany seemed to be pussy heaven. The GI's seem to know all about it. Very shocking to a 14 year old. A few years earlier in Hamburg, before the Beatles made it, a lot of the GIs had partied with those speed freaks. But the thing that really "wowed" me was the GI "hash" from Morocco. Va-va-va-Room! Take me to Warp #9 Mr. Scott! Hash was an unknown item in cowtown at the time. The GI's wouldn't let us drink at all but they were fine with giving us speed or smoking hash. Tim Kerrwood was the drummer for Denis at the time. He was a senior at North and little brother to Sargent Johnny Kerrwood. Johnny had gotten Dennis and Tim the gig at Fort Hayes in the first place. The crowd liked us so much they drunkenly booked two more return shows. On the 3rd gig I

played rhythm and Denis played bass. It was easier for him to play bass and sing lead. We did 3 gigs total before it was time for Jim & I to start 7th grade that fall. After that we did a few private parties in Lima Ohio with Dan White on vocal, Jim Jenkins on lead, me on Bass and Tim Kerwood on drums. It was the first time on the road. There was an open bar and all the adults got drunk and disappeared. Mostly likely to have sex. Next morning White, Jenkins and I woke up on the floor with killer hangovers. But then Dennis Craig and Danny White got into trouble and that ended that. Sadly no more hash for squiddy. One day during July, out of the blue, Dennis and Danny showed up and ask me to store a few guitars. A few days later they took the guitars and sold them I think. Then shit hit the fan. Both Danny & Dennis disappeared. I never knew what happen but they both got into trouble.



Shortly after this Jim wanted to sign up for a “traveling band wagon” that fall for the 1966 Ohio State Fair. I remember see **Sonny and Cher singing “I Got You Babe”** on the main stage, while **The Rebounds** played “Stepping Stone” on another stage. Shortly after **“The Beat Goes On”** 45 by Sonny and Cher hit the airwaves; all the girls in cowntown started to grow the hair out like Cher. To me It seemed that all the girls at North High School wanted to be Cher. But before we got The Elderberries together officially we did a few springtime jams on

Drunken Ernie Smalls back pouch. The line up consisted of Jim Jenkins (guitar), Frank Baker (drums) Me on rhythm guitar. Most of the time about 200 kids would come out to hear us jam. But it always ended with the cops telling Drunken Ernie to shut it off. I had become best friends Frank. He was a motherfucker on his 4 piece Ludwig Kit. I met Frank Baker in Mike Johnson’s basement when Mike was learning how to play bass. Frank was from the hood and had help Mike put in some couches and Blacklight posters. They painted the whole basement in black so as to highlight the posters on the wall. Also, they had a small portable record player for spinning 45’s. The local girls love it. But Mike’s mom kept turning off the power when the music got too loud. Most of the time she would only let 2 or 3 girls in to hear us play. Mike was milking it and used the place for sex when his mother was gone. Unfortunately, Frank died from a brain problem shortly before Jim & I formed the **“Elderberry Blossom Tea Band”**

“Elderberry Blossom Tea Band” consisted of Tim Kerrwood on drums, Me and Jenkins on guitars, and Danny White on bass. Dan White at that point; having gotten out of trouble, had taken up bass. But we needed a lead singer. Enter Dan Mahoney. Mahoney was pure Irishman to the bone. He loved to drink. No doubt because of the catholic nuns that dogged his ass at Sacred Heart School. His mom had been a nun. Oh Boy! We had to cool it around her. So, Jim and I ask Mahoney to be our lead singer. Mahoney went right out and bought a Custom 100 watt PA system. That is when we formed **“Elderberry Blossom Tea Band”**. Mahoney had a garage and an attic that we could rehearse in. He loved whiskey but was terrified of weed. But after a few weeks of hanging out after rehearsals with Me, Jim and Dan White stoned and laughing our brains; he decided to give it a go. He quickly turn into freak and got us all hooked on Kessler's Whiskey. On aug 20th 1966 at Crosley Field I went to see **The Beatles** but ended up only seeing **Ringo** walk out to check out his drum kit in the pouring rain. It was a sad grey day. I had waited in the bleachers for hours eating hotdogs and coke hoping they would play. But no luck. It had rain all day and at 5 PM they canceled show. I was kind of bummed when my mom picked me up at the stadium. Jim

wanted to go but his mom would not let him. On the greyhound bus back to columbus I began to cheer up. I was looking forward to playing the Ohio State Fair.



The way 1966 Ohio State Fair worked was the band would pull into the loading zone and set up its gear on a wagon. Then the 5 of us would play on a flatbed wagon pulled around the fairgrounds by a tractor. The wagon had a portable generator. We would stop and play a few songs then move on to the next stop. After about an hour or so we came back to the loading zone and broke down our equipment. It was very weird but exciting. About a 100 teenagers would follow us from stop to stop to hear our 15 minute show. While at the loading zone Mahoney had put whiskey into our pop. Every time the wagon started to roll we had to hold onto our equipment for dear life. It shook like hell. By the time the end of the ride came everyone except Tim Kerrwood was totally drunk. As far as I know Kerrwood never smoked or drank which is sad because he died unexpectedly of a brain clot in 1970. Being a human being is hard work and one should never pass up a chance to party. Just make sure you do no harm. In the middle of the fair they had this 50 foot statute of the Cardinal which we called the Giant Canary! After the gig we would store our gear at Mahoney's garage and go back to the Cardinal and smoked pot. The Feds had made pot illegal in 1906 but Ohio didn't make it illegal until 1970. The State Highway Troopers just thought the kids were smoking cigarettes. From our vantage point we could see the Dance Party Show being broadcast live on NBC TV 4 . The building only had a roof and no walls. It was a suburb exclusive social gathering and kids like us were not welcome. I doubt that in late august of 1966 that any of the Dance Party kids even knew what pot or hash was. Humans are weird. They like to show off their power and wealth to each other. It all seemed so fake and false to me.

After the fair gig Kerrwood wanted to leave the band. He had become a born again christian and hoped that it would keep him from going to vietnam. He never liked our pothead ways that much. But we had committed to two paying gigs from our State Fair debut . The first gig was in November at the 18th and Main Street Roller Rink and they paid us \$25 for 4 sets. The second gig in Dec was at swim club. It had a stage hall build over top and to the side of the pool call the "Upper Deck". It was located at East 5th Ave and Stelzer Road. Later on I think they move it to upper arlington. I had heard that **Roger McGuinn** of **The Birds** had all kinds of tuning problems playing his 12 string rickenbacker there a few weeks before our gig. The swimming pool downstairs must have kicked up the humidity. However, It had a wonderful psychedelic stage lighting and a 1st class PA system. For the upper deck show the band had adopted Nehure Satin Shirts with Crushed Velvet Jackets, Frilly Lace Poet Shirts and Velvet or Satin Bell Bottoms Slacks. We were dandies under the stage lights. But our gig at the Upper deck only drew about 25 kids and the hall could handle about 200. We didn't get a return booking. We had no 45 and no following. Most of these kids had seen us at the fair.

By January of 1967 Klinner Alley was becoming more hip. Steve Smith & Mike Johnson started to hang out with jim and I. They had become heads and were coping Dime bags from a Everett Jr. High School kid named Steve Stone. Stone thought of himself as a Jazz drummer. He was NOT! Slowly Smith and Stone started to drift away and to do their own thing. In the meantime a group of boys and girls would drive out to this wooded spot near a cave by the Columbus Zoo. We called it to doodle-hole. John Maynard and Oscar Staton

would bring beer. The girls then would take turns having sex with us in the backseat of the car. They even talk Jenkins into ounce. For some reason the girls would do whatever John ask them. They were loose and if they liked you they had no problem about fucking you. It was extremely rare to get any diseases back then. But that all changed in 1973 when STDs hit the Columbus scene. The girls all seemed to be madly in love with Oscar Staton or John Maynard. The rest of us thought they were goddess of mercy. Fucking Angels! Most of the time everyone ejactulated before penetration. The towels got messy. The girls love that. It was an ego boost for them. To make a boy cum before they entered her. One time it got so bad that no one could sit in the back seat due to sperm situation. There was about 12 of us in two cars. I remember it stank so bad we had to keep all the windows down. So we ended up using a blanket to cover it up. Little did I know what the future had in mind for me at that point. But boy, was I having fun.